

**From:** [Joseph Hubbard](#)  
**To:** [Ragan Broyles](#); [Eric Delgado](#); [Susan Webster](#); [Steve Mason](#)  
**Subject:** Articles: Las Conchas Wildfires  
**Date:** 06/29/2011 11:00 AM

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### **High Country News excerpt from last night, Udall and EPA, 6/28/11**

Today, the lab remains closed as the Las Conchas fire continues to roar. Twelve thousand people have been evacuated from the town of Los Alamos. While the facility hosts its own air monitoring stations that check for radiation, New Mexico Senator Tom Udall has asked the EPA to send additional mobile monitors. Residents are scared, understandably, that hazardous materials may be burned and enter the air stream or end up as ash in water sources.  
<http://www.hcn.org/hcn/blogs/goat/a-new-mexico-wildfire-poses-a-double-threat>

### **AP says wildfire within 50 feet of LANL grounds, made brief breach onto property yesterday - Newser, 6/28/11 6pm CDT**

The wildfire made one brief breach onto lab grounds yesterday, but that blaze was extinguished. Since then, it's remained outside the boundaries, though AP says it's only about 50 feet away. Officials, however, said no radioactive material was at risk, including outdoor drums of waste. "We are throwing absolutely everything at this that we got," said Sen. Tom Udall. He said the EPA, the state, and the lab were conducting separate air monitoring tests near the lab.  
<http://www.newser.com/story/122163/new-mexico-governor-lets-skip-the-fireworks.html>

### **Los Alamos Nuke Lab to Remain Closed Till Thursday As Wildfire Refuses to Die - International Business Times, 6/29/11**

By IB Times Staff Reporter | June 29, 2011 7:28 AM EDT

Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in New Mexico will remain closed through Thursday, June 30, as the Las Conchas Fire is threatening the nuclear lab.

"Laboratory facilities will be closed for all activities and nonessential employees are directed to remain off site. Personnel are considered nonessential unless they have received specific instructions from their supervisors to report to the Laboratory," the Lab said in a statement.

The fire, which has been contained 3 percent, has burnt 60,741 acres and destroyed 12 homes. Approximately 341 personnel including three hotshot crews and nine handcrews, with four dozers and 12 engines are fighting to contain the fire.

The Bureau of Land Management's Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument will close to the public beginning on Wednesday June 29. The monument isn't currently threatened, but the road to the monument will be used by firefighters to access the southern flank of the fire. Meanwhile, the Bandelier National Monument will be closed indefinitely.

### **Los Alamos Fire: EPA Testing for Radiation**

By RYAN OWENS

June 29, 2011

The wildfire that surrounds the nuclear lab in Los Alamos, New Mexico, has grown to at least 61,000 acres amid mounting concerns about what might be in the smoke



that's visible from space.

Such fear has prompted the Environmental Protection Agency to bring in air monitors, along with a special airplane that checks for radiation levels. So far officials have not been able to find anything.

"Our facilities and nuclear material are protected and safe," Laboratory Director Dr. Charles McMillan told ABC News.

The Los Alamos facility -- the birthplace of the atomic bomb -- was shrouded in secrecy long before it was surrounded by smoke after the Las Conchas fire began Sunday.

"It contains approximately 20,000 barrels of nuclear waste," former top security official Glen Walp said. "It's not contained within a concrete, brick and mortar-type building, but rather in a sort of fabric-type building that a fire could easily consume. "Potential is high for a major calamity if the fire would reach these areas," he added.

The flames from the 95-square-mile fire have reportedly reached as close as 50 feet from the grounds. With a wildfire so close, lab officials, along with government officials such as New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez, are trying to reassure the public of the plant's safety.

"I know the laboratory is secure and they're ready for this kind of emergency situation," Stephanie Chavez, a resident of Los Alamos, told ABC News.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/los-alamos-fire-epa-testing-radiation/story?id=13953953>